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20 May 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMITTEE ON CONFERENCES
Substantive session
Agenda item 12*

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

Draft report

Rapporteur: Mr. Imre KARBUCZKY (Hungary)

Addendum

II. IMPROVED COORDINATION OF CONFERENCES WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM: IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 43/222 B, PARAGRAPH 4 (f)

Introduction and overview

1. At its 300th meeting, on 24 August 1989, the Committee agreed that it should examine how it could best address its terms of reference as governed by paragraph 4 (f) of General Assembly resolution 43/222 B and requested the Secretariat to examine the current status of coordination, identifying any difficulties or problems and suggesting possible solutions with a view to making the necessary improvements. The Committee further requested its Chairman to address a letter to the Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) in order to avail itself of the opportunity to benefit from that Committee's views. Subsequently, the Organizational Committee of ACC decided to refer the matter to the Inter-Agency Meeting for Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications (IAMLADP).

2. At its 328th meeting, on 19 August 1991, the Committee took note of the progress report provided by the Secretariat. At its 349th and 350th meetings, on 19 May 1993, the Committee on Conferences reviewed a report on the item, including information on action taken by ACC (A/AC.172/1993/CRP.3).

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* A/AC.172/150/Add.1.

93-29640 (E)

Discussion

3. The Secretariat indicated that inter-agency coordination and consultation, including the systematic exchange of information and language staff, were in place in the United Nations system, particularly at duty stations where a number of specialized agencies were located.

4. The Committee noted that the primary focus in terms of coordination was appropriate at the regional level, and that such coordination, including thematic coordination, would ensure the effective participation by Member States at meetings, as well as optimize the use of scarce conference-servicing resources. Such coordination should be furthered. In that connection, an appropriate computerized information system, particularly at Geneva, where a large number of specialized agencies are based, should be developed to allow information regarding schedules of meetings to be readily available.

5. The organization of world conferences should take into account the capacities of Member States and of the system.

6. The Committee noted that conclusions presented in the paper were valid, and welcomed exchanges of permanent language staff among agencies as a factor in the cost-effective use of permanent conference staff, although such an arrangement would not necessarily obviate the need for additional freelance staff, as the number of staff that could be loaned was probably limited.

7. It was agreed that the Secretary-General should be requested to call upon the specialized agencies to pursue system-wide coordination.

Conclusions and recommendations

8. The Committee noted with appreciation the level of coordination within the United Nations system, especially at given duty stations, and the agreement reached with regard to establishing a systematic exchange of information and language staff within the system to promote effective utilization of conference staff.

9. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it should request the Secretary-General as Chairman of ACC, through the established mechanism of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications, to encourage further system-wide coordination of conference activities including coordination of meetings schedules with a view to optimizing the use of available conference services, resources and facilities, with due regard to quality, as well as ensuring the effective participation of Member States, and to report on the results achieved to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session through the Committee on Conferences.

10. The Committee also wishes to emphasize that any decisions to convene world conferences should take into account the impact of such conferences on the capacity of the United Nations system to provide conference services as well as the capacity of Member States to participate in them.